

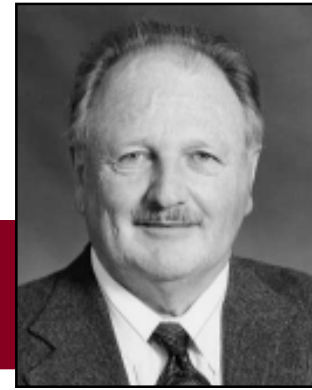
## Representative Bill Eickmeyer

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# A report to the 35th District

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**Representative  
Bill Eickmeyer**

## Report to the 35th District

February 1998

Dear Neighbor:

*The 1998 Legislative Session was ushered in with quietly falling snow and treacherously icy roads. Like the weather, there are some issues settling over the capitol that I will be giving close scrutiny to on your behalf. Among the most pressing are:*



### **The supplemental budget:**

It's anticipated that our state will continue having a budget surplus of nearly \$900 million. Most other states would be very envious of our situation. There are many proposals on the legislative drawing board for using these funds. These include providing more tax breaks for individuals and/or businesses, investing more money in programs like public education, worker retraining, or basic-health insurance, and putting the surplus away for a rainy day. My hope is that we will wisely put most of this surplus into the piggy bank, not the hog trough.

Representative Bill Eickmeyer  
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Natural Resources  
Trade and Economic  
Development

# Representative Bill Eickmeyer — Report to the 35th District

## ◆ **Transportation:**

Our transportation infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, and marine transportation is in dire need of repair and, in some areas, expansion. Like a good education, a good transportation system means jobs for the working families in our district. A crowded highway is not just an inconvenience for motorists--it also means that our ports are at a competitive disadvantage with others on the West Coast because it takes so much longer to move goods on our highways.

## ◆ **Education:**

Assuring a good education remains our paramount duty. Our public education system is the backbone of our democracy and the door to economic success and happiness for our citizens. Taking inflation into account, current school funding is down from last year by \$68 per student--\$261 less than we were investing in 1993. What's more, local homeowners are bearing a larger share of school costs through local levies and bond issues. We need to strengthen school funding and ease some of the pressure on local property taxpayers.

## ◆ **Energy deregulation:**

Our state currently boasts the lowest electric rates in the country. California and New York, for example, pay more than twice what we do for power. So why would anyone support deregulating the electric industry? Deregulation supporters suggest that competition would lower our prices even more, but opponents counter that it's all about saving money for large industrial users. I will be carefully scrutinizing any energy-deregulation legislation to ensure that residential consumers are charged rates that are the same or lower than at present, and that consumers are protected from fraud and abusive practices.



*Rep. Eickmeyer takes the oath of office on January 9, 1998.*

## ◆ **Juvenile justice:**

I consider our juvenile justice system to be the worst in the country. Last year's reform measures were a good start, but I would like to give more teeth to the intervention services for runaway and out-of-control teens and allow the juvenile court system more discretion and latitude, thereby increasing the effectiveness of court intervention at all levels.

These are just a few of the issues sure to face lawmakers in this short, 60-day session. As your representative, I welcome your comments and concerns. If you would like more information about the items discussed here, just call.

It is a great honor to serve you here in Olympia.

Sincerely,

*Bill Eickmeyer*  
Bill Eickmeyer

State Representative • 35<sup>th</sup> District